

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:00 p.m. Executive Session, Mrs. Winters made a motion to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 and §42-46-5 (a) (2) Litigation update: Lamendola v. Town of EG, et al. Mr. Osborne seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair (arrived at 7:10 p.m.); Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. Clark Smith; Mr. David Osborne; Mr. Michael Fain, and Dr. Yan Sun (arrived at 6:13 p.m.). Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; and Mr. Brad Wilson, Director of Student Services were also in attendance.

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular for February 24, 2015

On a motion by Mr. Smith, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the regular minutes for February 24, 2015.

b. Budget meeting for March 3, 2015

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Osborne, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the budget meeting minutes for March 3, 2015.

V. Superintendent's Report (including Committee updates)

a. Ad Hoc Committees

1. Study Start Times

This committee is in the process of writing a report that will be presented to the School Committee in April and will also be scheduling another meeting.

2. Academic Calendar

This committee met prior to tonight's School Committee meeting. They will prepare a report with recommendations that will be presented to the School Committee at the April 7th meeting.

3. All Day Kindergarten

This group has not met again since the All-Day K report was presented to the School Committee.

VI. School Committee Concerns

There were no concerns.

VII. Action Items

a. Appointments

- 1. Head Coach Baseball-EGHS-Bob Downey**
- 2. Assistant Coach Baseball-EGHS-Bill O'Connell**
- 3. Volunteer Coach Baseball-EGHS-Brad Van Fechtmann**
- 4. Volunteer Coach Baseball-EGHS-Jared Hopkins**
- 5. Volunteer Coach Baseball-EGHS-Greg D'Ambrosca**
- 6. Head Coach Softball-EGHS-Rob Petrucci**
- 7. Assistant Coach Softball-EGHS-Kerri Fuller**
- 8. Volunteer Coach Softball-Doug Mainerio**
- 9. Head Coach Boys' Volleyball-EGHS-Justin Amaral**
 - 10. Assistant Coach Boys' Volleyball-EGHS-Kyle Medeiros**
 - 11. Head Coach Golf-EGHS-Marc Brocato**
 - 12. Head Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Brian Trapani**
 - 13. Assistant Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Chris Callahan**
 - 14. Volunteer Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Brian Hennessey**
 - 15. Volunteer Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Bruce Roberts**
 - 16. Head Coach Girls' Lacrosse-EGHS-Karen Lemont**
 - 17. Assistant Coach Girls' Lacrosse-EGHS-Kathleen Swanson**
 - 18. Head Coach Boys' Outdoor Track-EGHS-Peter Dion**
 - 19. Assistant Coach Boys' Outdoor Track-EGHS-Kate Mangano**
 - 20. Head Coach Girls' Outdoor Track-EGHS-Erin Newman**
 - 21. Assistant Coach Girls' Outdoor Track-EGHS-Kyle Mushaweh**

22. Head Coach Boys' Tennis-EGHS-Marissa Salvadore

23. Head Coach Baseball-Cole-Ed Botelho

24. Head Coach Softball-Cole-Deb McMullen

On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve all appointments pending completion of all necessary certification/BCI documentation.

b. Discussion/Adoption of the FY2016 Budget

At last week's School Committee meeting, Dr. Mercurio was asked to review the proposed budget again with budget owners and provide the Committee with a budget proposal with a 3-3.5% increase. The executive summary reflects previous staff reductions (i.e., (2) library/media specialists, (2) school nurse/teachers, PBGR Coordinator) added back in and newly proposed reductions including a grade 2 teacher at Meadowbrook, special educator, two paraprofessionals, and the addition of a .20 FTE chorus position at Cole. The special educator and two paraprofessional positions are not current positions, but "newly" proposed positions. Benefit reductions reflect the increase change in health and dental rates. The .20 FTE reduction for the chorus position reflects a proposed increase in the current individual's FTE.

Dr. Mercurio explained the proposed revenue and noted the school department can only request a maximum 4% increase over the prior year. The current proposal without the all-day kindergarten equity model is a 3% change in local revenue and with the equity model is 3.44%. Dr. Mercurio discussed the equity model that will cost

approximately \$142,000 with the majority of costs in human resources. \$4,700 will be offset by state funding for all-day kindergarten. The district recently learned that the equity model should qualify for the \$15,000 start-up costs provided by RIDE. The proposed budget including the equity model is a 3.65% total increase over FY2015. Dr. Mercurio thanked Mrs. Wilcox and all budget owners for their assistance in the budget process.

Eldredge student Julia Hasseltine spoke about the importance of the library/media specialist and school-nurse teachers. The School Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions about the proposed budget. Dr. Gifford asked questions regarding the \$20,000 cut in library books and how the \$12,000 cut in athletics affects the percentage increase over FY2015. Mrs. Wilcox noted the cut brings the proposed budget down from an 8.18% increase to a 6.04% increase. \$18,000 would need to be cut to bring this budget in line with other proposed budgets.

Dr. Sun questioned the \$20,000 proposed for Chromebook damages. Dr. Mercurio explained this cost is only for the EGHS and covers uninsured damages. Mr. Podraza noted that out of 760 devices (including 30 housed in the library), 77% (590) are insured and 22.7% are uninsured. Dr. Mercurio noted the optional insurance is \$31.00 per year and the district cannot require that parents' purchase it, nor can the district withhold a Chromebook from a student. Dr. Gifford questioned whether a policy is needed so students' lose privileges

for devices that are broken on purpose. Mrs. Winters questioned whether it would be cost effective for the district to purchase the insurance for the uninsured, rather than paying for the full cost of repairs for those devices. Dr. Mercurio

noted a cost analysis would need to be completed. Ms. Mark would like a cost benefit analysis completed over the next year to see what makes more fiscal sense. Mr. Podraza explained that the “uninsured” families’ have been contacted several times to see if they will purchase insurance. He added that funds have been used from the student activity account and from Bob Houghtaling to purchase insurance for those who cannot afford it.

Mr. Osborne questioned the number of devices that can be repaired/replaced with \$20,000. Mr. Babson explained that it depends on the part and the issue. As of February 20, 2015, forty-three insured devices out of fifty have been repaired.

Dr. Mercurio explained the “new” proposed staff reductions, including the reduction of a grade two teacher at Meadowbrook. The special education educator and two paraprofessionals are “newly” proposed positions and will not cut existing staff. The .20 FTE addition was originally proposed to expand the chorus program at Cole. Mrs. Winters discussed the need to keep the proposed .20 FTE for chorus. She discussed the history of the program and the cut that decreased the position to a .50 FTE. Mrs. Winters

explained how the Cole teacher is using “Cole time” for chorus as a

Band-Aid for the lack of staffing. The additional .20 FTE would allow all grades at Cole to participate in a chorus program. Mr. Smith and Dr. Sun voiced their support for the proposed budget and echoed Mrs. Winters that the .20 FTE should remain in the budget. Dr. Gifford also expressed her thanks to Mrs. Winters for her role in building the music program. Dr. Mercurio and Mr. Cobain explained the proposed additions to the athletic budget detailing the number of students impacted by these programs. Mr. Cobain discussed the increased interest in middle school cross country, track, and EGHS boys' tennis.

Mr. Osborne discussed the proposed expenditures for Math and questioned the timing of this purchase due to what is happening with the Common Core. Mrs. Meyer mentioned that families' miss having a Math textbook as a resource. Mr. Podraza explained that Math spending has been on hold due to other purchases. Dr. Mercurio noted the district has time to go back and revisit Math purchases to determine whether these purchases can be delayed.

The Committee discussed the implementation of the equity model of all-day kindergarten at Frenchtown. Mr. Marcaccio and Mrs. Vaughn were asked about enrollment limits at each school and how many students the program will serve. Ramp-up needs, readiness, and early screening of the students were discussed in regards to how students are chosen for all-day kindergarten. Dr. Gifford asked how many students can be served at a cost of \$144,000 and asked for

more direction as to what the program can accomplish. Ad Hoc K member, Bridget Hayes, reminded the committee that the all-day kindergarten equity program would alleviate “pressure” in other half-day “k” programs.

The current model at Meadowbrook does include itinerants. The proposed Frenchtown program would also include itinerants and will be cost neutral.

Long-term implications, due to capital improvement cuts, were discussed by Mrs. Colgan and Mrs. Meyer. Dr. Gifford voiced her concerns to cut funds from library books and asked if the athletic budget and Chromebook repair budget could be reviewed again so funds can be put back in the chorus and library book lines. On a motion by Dr. Gifford, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the FY2016 budget of \$36,914,626, which reflects the all-day kindergarten equity model and the addition of a .20 FTE in chorus. Dr. Mercurio added the district would receive funds for the equity model, which will offset the chorus cost. He also noted the district can still move around funds (within the budget) until the budget is approved. A budget discussion will take place with the Town Council on March 23rd with a formal presentation on April 13th.

VIII. Discussion

a. Health Code Violations

Ms. Kelly McKeon and Mr. John McGrath of Aramark and Mr. Robert Wilmarth, Director of Facilities were present to discuss the recently

published health code violations. Mr. McGrath noted the published health code violations were reported for a three-year period. Schools are inspected by the Department of Health twice a year and the schools average 1-2 violations per inspection. Mr. McGrath explained that most violations are corrected on site and all violations are taken seriously. Mr. Wilmarth also noted that violations are taken seriously and are taken care of immediately or within a week. Ms. McKeon indicated that internal school inspections are done monthly using Eco Process. Ms. Mark questioned the internal process of reporting the violations to the Superintendent. Mr. Wilmarth noted Aramark reports their concerns to him, work orders are then created, the work is completed, and the complaint is filed. Ms. McKeon said all immediate issues are called in to Mr. Wilmarth. She then follows up with the location to ensure the work has been completed. Mr. Wilmarth indicated he could notify the Superintendent of all inspection reports completed by the Department of Health.

IX. Advisory/Subcommittee Updates

a. Mental Health Subcommittee

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to table this update until the next meeting.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. Sun, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 7-0 to adjourn at 9:27 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECETARY